



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

MEETING DATE: Tuesday, February 25, 2025
TO: CITY COUNCIL
WRITTEN BY: INTERIM COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR MEEK
RECOMMENDED BY: AIRPORT DIRECTOR WILLIAMS
APPROVED BY: TAMARA VIDES, CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: AUTHORIZE RFP ISSUANCE FOR CONSULTANT SERVICES FOR PREPARATION OF A POTENTIAL UPDATE TO THE AIRPORT LAYOUT PLAN AND ASSOCIATED UPDATE TO THE AIRPORT MASTER PLAN AND CORRESPONDING ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the City Council adopt a resolution authorizing and directing the release of the Request for Proposals (RFP) for consultant services for analysis of potential update to the Airport Layout Plan and associated update to the Airport Master Plan, including compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA).

BACKGROUND:

On October 24, 2023, the Council adopted the Airport Master Plan and Airport Layout Plan. At that same meeting, Council directed staff to return by March 2024 to discuss crosswind runway options. On March 19, 2024, the City Council directed staff to return with a presentation regarding potential deactivation of the crosswind runway.

DISCUSSION:

Staff has prepared an RFP for consulting services for the preparation of an update to the Airport Layout Plan (ALP) and associated update to the Airport Master Plan analyzing the deactivation (closure) of Watsonville Municipal Airport's Runway 9-27. The updated ALP will require an airfield reconfiguration evaluation involving an analysis of current design standards, justification of proposed changes, and identification of any proposed changes to aeronautical-use parcels (the "Project"). The Project ultimately would include the deactivation, following Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) guidance, of Runway 9-27 (a 3,998-foot crosswind runway) and parallel taxiway "Charlie" as depicted on the 2023 Watsonville Municipal Airport Layout Plan, dated July 19, 2023. The analysis will consider alternatives to deactivation, including shortening the runway.

In addition, the RFP requests services to evaluate the Project’s environmental impacts in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA). The environmental review process would commence with the preparation of an initial study under CEQA and an Environmental Assessment (“EA”) under NEPA. The City anticipates that an Addendum to the previously certified Airport Master Plan EIR under CEQA and a FONSI under NEPA may be appropriate; however, the initial study and EA would determine if subsequent or supplemental CEQA review or if a greater level of NEPA analysis would be required.

Proposals from qualified firms would be due by Friday, April 11, 2025. Staff anticipate selecting a firm in May and commencing work in June 2025.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

This action is exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(5), in that adopting a Resolution issuing Request for Proposals (RFP) for consultant services does not meet CEQA's definition of a “project,” because the action does not have the potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment and if a “project,” is exempt under the “common sense” exception (14 Cal. Code Regs. § 15061(b)(3)) because it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that this action may have a significant effect on the environment.

STRATEGIC PLAN:

This action is consistent with the following priorities:

- Economic Development
- Housing
- Fiscal Health
- Public Safety

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There is no financial impact as a result of this item. A final cost will be determined upon receipt of the proposals and awarded contract to a qualified firm by the Council at a future public meeting.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION:

The City Council may decide not to authorize the release of the RFP at this time.

REFERENCES:

None.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Request for Proposals for Deactivation of Runway 9-27 at Watsonville Municipal Airport, Including Compliance with CEQA and NEPA